



DRAFT

GCSE

ECONOMICS

Our qualification is designed to inspire learners and encourage an interest in real-world economics. It has been created to be innovative yet retain coverage of the basic economic principles, enabling learners to develop their ability to apply this knowledge to real-life situations in a range of local, national and global contexts.

What's happening to GCSEs?

OCR is offering new GCSEs for first teaching in September 2009*.

We've taken this opportunity to improve the quality of our GCSEs for teachers and learners alike.

We've made improvements in three key areas: updated and relevant content, a focus on developing students' personal, learning and thinking skills, and flexible assessment, so teachers can choose the best learning approach for the job.

We want to make the introduction of these new GCSEs as easy for you to manage as possible.

The main changes are:

- Controlled assessment will be introduced for most subjects
- The opportunity will be taken to bring course content up to date
- Examinations should provide opportunity for extended writing and more varied question types
- All GCSEs will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Our approach is to provide consistency across all our GCSEs by offering the flexibility that unitised qualifications bring, allowing teaching and assessment in either a linear or unitised fashion.

*Not all GCSEs are changing. There are a few exceptions: the new Science GCSE was introduced in 2006. New English, English Literature, ICT and Maths GCSEs will be offered for first teaching in 2010.



Improving GCSE Economics with OCR

We've involved teachers throughout the development process, so the new specifications, support materials and schemes of work should be exactly what you need to teach OCR GCSE Economics. To ensure accuracy in our content, we've also consulted subject associations, professional membership groups, subject societies and other subject experts.



Our GCSE Economics offers:

- A fresh approach to the case studies paper, Unit A593, which is based on a real-life economic situation and therefore helps the learner apply their knowledge rather than memorise economic theory
- Availability of computer-based testing for Unit A591, which makes the access to and manipulation of data much more interesting and true to real life
- A clear definition of micro- and macro-economics within the units, which makes the assessment objectives easy to translate.

Making change easy

We'd like to make these changes as easy for you to manage as possible. To minimise disruption, we will:

- Guide you through the process of moving to OCR
- Bring you the latest information through our Focus on 14–19 magazine and our new website www.GCSEchanges.com
- Show you approved specifications one year ahead of first teaching, so you have plenty of preparation time
- Offer you a range of OCR support materials, including schemes of work and sample assessment materials, as we did with GCEs
- Make OCR's publisher partner resources – tailored to the new specifications – available from January 2009
- Endorse a variety of published resources, giving you a wider choice of quality support materials.

We're also running extra INSET and training courses across the UK, so now it's even easier to discover how OCR has developed its specifications.

Controlled assessment

While reviewing GCSEs, QCA looked into the coursework element of the current qualifications and decided to introduce controlled assessment as an alternative to coursework. This will address some of the issues raised in recent coursework reviews, such as plagiarism.

Controlled assessment has to be done in a supervised environment. However, if the task has a research element, the student may complete this without supervision.

The benefits of controlled assessment include:

- More straightforward marking – for most subjects, we provide worksheets for students to complete
- Improved reliability and validity
- Varying levels of control, to help you manage the assessments and your time more easily
- Greater confidence in authenticating students' work as their own
- Greater ease in fitting assessments into your normal teaching programmes.

Controlled assessment is not part of the GCSE Economics specification.



Flexible assessment

The assessment for the new OCR GCSEs is organised into units which can either all be taken at the end of the course in a linear fashion, or be used to complement a more unitised approach to teaching and learning. This gives you the flexibility to choose the assessment approach best suited to your centre and your students. A unitised structure gives you the flexibility to co-teach short and full courses.

We already offer assessments that are organised into units at A Level and for some existing GCSEs. For many subjects, assessments will be available twice a year. Flexible assessment means:

- You will have a choice of learning approaches – linear or unitised
- The assessment can be timed to match the point of learning within the course, making it easier for candidates to show what they know, understand and can do
- Students can re-sit a unit rather than repeat the entire assessment
- Some students are motivated by ongoing feedback and this helps them identify their learning needs
- A unitised approach makes it easier for students to stay on track with their studies and manage their time effectively
- The pressure of an 'all or nothing' assessment is removed
- Examination stress is reduced by permitting assessment over a longer period so that not all assessments are concentrated in a narrow window at the end of two years

- With a similar format to A Levels and Diplomas, GCSEs will help prepare students for the next phase of their education.

To ensure that the assessment supports the coherence of the GCSEs and there is no over-assessment, QCA has put two rules in place: 40% of the assessment must happen at the end of the course and only one re-sit of each assessment unit is allowed.

You may know 'unitised' as modular.

Unit title and description	Assessment including duration	Weighting
Unit A591: How the Market Works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates will consider the basic economic problem and how it affects the allocation of resources in competitive markets • Candidates will learn how price is determined through the forces of demand and supply and how a firm competes in the market. 	Written examination 1 hour	25%
Unit A592: How the Economy Works <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates will consider three of the main variables in the economy and how these are influenced by government policy • The unit will cover the expenditure and revenue of government, including taxes and the effects that these have on the economy. 	Computer-base test or written examination 1 hour	25%
Unit A593: The UK Economy and Globalisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates will build on the knowledge and skills gained in Units A591 and A592 while looking at the UK economy and globalisation • Candidates will look at trade and its implications, at local, national and global levels. 	Written examination 1 hour 30 minutes	50%

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives are designed to reflect the non-statutory guidelines for Economics.

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following in the context of the content described:

AO1

- Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology.

AO2

- Apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts.

AO3

- Analyse and evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present appropriate conclusions.



What changes, and what stays the same?

	What changes?	What stays the same?
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no longer any tiers • All three units are compulsory • There is greater weighting on the case study unit instead of equal weighting for all units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-release case study.
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro- and macro-economics have been clearly defined in Units A591 and A592 • Unit A593 builds on the knowledge learnt in the two preceding units • Topics have expanded to cover global economics instead of just the European Union • The assessment objectives relate directly to the content • The content has been streamlined so that the learners focus purely on relevant, modern-day issues surrounding economics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The theory of economics and how it relates to modern business is kept • The specification has a familiar look and feel to it. It feels the same but benefits from being freshly updated to include recent economic examples and is, therefore, more relevant • All the best features have been kept from the current specification, including the pre-release case study.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Units are weighted differently • Examination time has been reduced for Units A591 and A592, which are both now an hour each. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All units are externally assessed.

Support for GCSE Economics teachers

OCR offers a range of support materials, developed following extensive research and consultation with teachers. We've designed them to save you time when preparing for the new specifications and to support you while teaching them.

Our support materials and events include face-to-face training courses, schemes of work that you can customise, endorsed publisher partner resources, access to teacher and examiner networks (both online and offline), plus an extensive past-papers service.

OCR's online resources include:

- E-communities – online networks of subject specialists for sharing knowledge, views and ideas
- Interchange – a completely free and secure website that helps you carry out the administrative tasks associated with examinations quickly and easily
- Past examination papers
- Marking schemes
- Subject e-alerts – for teachers who register for updates.

We offer a wide range of training courses in the UK, so you have easy access to information about our new specifications – direct from the experts. See over for more details.



Our Get Ready events offer a taste of the new specification. Dates are given below, and you can book your place now at www.GCSEchanges.com.

Later, we'll be running our Get Started events, which take you through the specification in more detail and help you work towards first teaching. They will take place during the spring and summer terms 2009.

Get Ready – introducing the new specification (first teaching from September 2009)*

This course is for all teachers – new and experienced – who are interested in finding out more about the new specification. It's open to you, even if you don't teach the current OCR specification.

It's a **FREE** half-day session, including refreshments, a light finger buffet and course materials, offering an overview of the new OCR specification in GCSE Economics. Key features include:

- A look at the new structure, content and assessment methods
- A comparison between old and new specification content
- An introduction to the support and resources available from OCR
- A summary of the benefits of choosing the new OCR specification.

Date	Location	Course code
Thurs 10 Jul 08 AM	London	OECA101
Thurs 10 Jul 08 PM	London	OECA102
Wed 17 Sep 08 AM	London	OECA103
Wed 17 Sep 08 PM	London	OECA104
Mon 19 Jan 09 AM	London	OECA105
Mon 19 Jan 09 PM	London	OECA106

Please note:

- Free OCR Training courses will not incur any penalty fees however, so that we can offer your place to another delegate please notify us in good time of your course cancellation.
- Dates are subject to change so please ensure you read your booking confirmation and web updates as OCR Training cannot be held responsible for delegates who attend on an incorrect date.
- Courses throughout summer 2008 and autumn 2008 terms may be based on the draft specification.
- *The times of these courses may vary from the standard advertised time.

We're working with publisher partner Heinemann to provide further resources to support teachers of the new specification.

Resource	Format	Samples available from
Teacher Support Revision Guide	Print Print	March 2009 March 2009



To find the latest information on published resources, please visit www.ocr.org.uk/economics/newgcse and choose published resources from the right-hand menu.



www.ocr.org.uk

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